

The Meeting of the Parish Council was held virtually via the Zoom platform on Monday the 8th day of MARCH 2021 – commencing 7.00 pm

COUNCILLORS PRESENT: Messrs Rayner (Chair), Lambert (Vice-Chair), Cock, Cole, Storey and Studd, Mrs Arnold, Mrs Bane, Mrs McGeeney, Mrs Peckham and Mrs Wilson. Also present 3 members of the public and Squadron Leader Turnbull.

APOLOGIES: None received.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST: Mr Cole expressed an interest in Item 24.

MINUTES: Minutes of the last meeting held Monday 8th February were approved. Mrs Bane proposed, Mr Studd seconded, all in favour.

PUBLIC SPEAKING: No issues were raised by members of the public.

MATTERS ARISING

1. **RAF Feltwell** – Sqn Leader was pleased to report there had been no Covid-19 cases reported in any of the school children or school staff since schools reopened on Base on 25th January. All US public officials are now wearing face masks at all times as per the new presidential directive. 5500 vaccinations have been carried out so far, consisting of both first and second vaccinations. There had been one case of Covid-19 the week before last and three last week. Sqn Leader believed Mr Storey's trees had been cut but Mr Storey will email Sqn Leader to confirm. Clerk had enquired if Portal Close street lights were owned by the USAF following a call from a resident advising one needed attention and Sqn Leader said he was investigating this. Sqn Leader will attend a social-distanced meeting with a resident following an email to the Clerk in which she stated the family pet rabbit had passed away as a result of the explosions on 25th February. Mr Lambert asked if more specific timing of the explosions could be advised so that people could be better prepared. Sqn Leader said more notice could be given for routine detonations but not for those carried out in emergency situations. Mr Rayner said the recent training involving a number of explosions on two consecutive days was just not acceptable in the centre of the village when there are other locations, such as Stanta, nearby. Sqn Leader said the tour of the Base was still going ahead as soon as Covid-19 conditions permitted and that he would enquire if the video to be shown at that meeting could be released. Mr Storey said this would be helpful and thanked Sqn Leader for attending the meetings. Mr Cole asked if the Parish Council was going to bring this matter to the attention of Elizabeth Truss MP as had been suggested in recent meetings. Sqn Leader departed the meeting at 7.55 pm. Mr Rayner proposed writing to Elizabeth Truss MP to ask for her assistance in this matter, Mr Cole seconded, 8 in favour, Mrs Peckham abstained.

2. **SNT** – Police Connect emails circulated, no reports regarding Feltwell.

3. **Risk Assessment** – **Inspections:** Handyman is carrying out weekly inspections and no issues have been reported since the last meeting. Clerk said Fenland Leisure have installed the new grab rails and carried out the last quarterly inspection, report had been received earlier that day and would be circulated in due course. Clerk will obtain quote for quarterly inspections going forward and the annual operational inspection has been pencilled in for June. **Skate Park:** Handyman has built up the mounds and Mrs Bane proposed purchasing grass seed for them, Mrs Wilson seconded, all in favour. **Boundary Wall:** No correspondence from owner's insurance company as yet.

4. **Balance Sheet** – No queries.

5. **Allotment Pest Control** – No report received for February.

MATTERS ARISING (CONT)

6. NALC – NALC bulletins circulated as received. Clerk said Handyman is attending the Play Equipment Inspection course 12th May and Mrs Wilson said she would like to attend the introductory Councillor and Planning courses. Mr Cole said he had booked himself onto the Planning course in May and Mr Rayner said the council should pay for this. Mrs Peckham enquired how much this was and Mr Cole said it was £30. Mr Rayner proposed paying for Mr Cole to attend this course, Mr Storey seconded, all in favour.

7. Ranger Visit – Clerk said the next visit is scheduled for April. Cleaning of the signs at the top of Lodge Road had been programmed by Highways but Clerk will request the verges of the playing field are cut back as originally scheduled for January. Mrs Wilson asked if the silt/mud/ gravel in the middle of Lodge Road turning right onto the B1112 could be cleared. Mr Rayner said the verges of Hythe Road from the entrance of the allotments to Munsons Lane needed attention as they are caving into the road. Footpath along Hill Street needs clearing of straw and other debris.

8. Parish Partnership Scheme – No news as yet.

9. Locality Budget – Mr Rayner said the flashing 20mph sign had been installed earlier that day. Mr Storey said the Locality Budget is to be increased from 6K to 10K as agreed at the NCC Budget Meeting. He had met Andrew Wallace and Mark Sharman to agree priorities which could include installing a new footpath from Portal Close to Manor Park Estate and kerbing, draining and bollards at the corner of Munsons Lane which should be within the remit. Mr Wallace is collating financial figures for each project.

10. Cllr Martin Storey Report – Mr Storey said he had attended the NCC Budget Meeting and Council Tax is being increased by 3.99%; all information can be found on the Council Tax bill.

11. Fence – On hold due to Covid-19.

12. Online Banking – Chair will continue to pursue.

13. Small Business Grant – Clerk said a further two grants totalling £7811.43 had been awarded for closure of the Changing Rooms. Mrs Bane said she and Mrs Peckham had met two companies to discuss resurfacing the tennis court and replacing the surrounding fencing and the most cost competitive quote was £13K including a replacement net. It had been suggested that an application for CIL funding could be made for this project but Mrs Peckham believed any application had to be match funded and suggested £6.5K could be allocated from these grants. Mrs Peckham felt that if the grants were awarded for the Changing Room closure then they should be spent on the playing field and Mrs McGeeney agreed. Mr Studd had no issue with the money being spent on the field but questioned whether the timing was right when some people are under so much financial pressure, and felt the resurfacing would only benefit a few people. Mrs Peckham said the funding is designed for projects that promote health and wellbeing, both concerning issues at the present time. She argued the court is well-used and the village is fortunate to have the facility as it is also used by people from other villages. Mr Cole felt the money should be kept in reserve and the financial position monitored, and commented that any extra money always seemed to be spent on the playing field. Mr Lambert said the money had not been expected and if the grants covered the cost of the work then he couldn't see an issue, furthermore a considerable amount of money had been spent on the bus shelters and new street lights in previous years. Mrs Bane agreed, stating the court is a free facility used by all age groups. Mrs Wilson said the playing field is Feltwell's only communal area and therefore money should be ploughed into improving it. Mrs McGeeney proposed ring-fencing the second and third grants for expenditure on the playing field, Mrs Bane seconded, 5 in favour, 4 against. Mr Storey said he felt it was vital to have a thriving playing field and suggested charging people to use the court. Mr Lambert proposed the tennis court remain a free facility, Mrs Wilson seconded, all in favour.

MATTERS ARISING (CONT)

14. Operation 'London Bridge' – Chair said he would circulate the final draft for approval which can be ratified at the next meeting.
15. Street Light – Clerk said LED light had been installed at Fair Close.
16. Bus Shelter & Play Equipment Cleaning – Clerk to contact Westcotec for advice on cleaning chemicals to remove the poster marks.
17. CIL Funding Opportunity – Mr Rayner proposed applying for funding to be spent on the playing field, Mr Lambert seconded, 8 in favour, Mr Studd abstained. Mrs Peckham proposed resurfacing the tennis court and replacing surrounding fencing, Mrs Bane seconded, 8 in favour, Mr Studd against. Clerk to make application.
18. Annual Playground Inspection Quotes – See Item 3.
19. Highways – Clerk to report loose drain cover at The Beck junction with Oak Street, small pothole at Addisons Close entrance and numerous potholes along Old Brandon Road which Mrs McGeeney said was in a terrible state.
20. Overgrown Hedge – Mrs Peckham felt the hedge at 2 Newcombe Drive was not encroaching onto the pavement as much as that belonging to 6 Newcombe Drive. Mr Lambert proposed writing to both owners, Mr Studd second, all in favour.
21. Sanitizing Stations – Clerk confirmed sanitizing stations were available via the Borough Council's EU funding pot and had circulated the details. Mr Storey proposed requesting two stations, one to be positioned outside the One Stop and the other outside Londis, Mr Cole seconded, all in favour. Clerk to contact Borough Council.
22. Appointment of Internal Auditor – Clerk had contacted six accountants however two did not carry out internal audits and two were not taking on any extra work. Quotes received were from TWR Accountants at £310 + VAT and Wheelers Accountants at £400 + VAT. Mrs Peckham proposed TWR Accountants undertake the internal audit, Mr Lambert seconded, all in favour.
23. Street Light Energy Renewal – Clerk obtained four quotations, the most cost competitive was from current provider E.ON at an estimated annual contract cost of £3490 + VAT. Mr Rayner proposed renewing with E.ON, Mr Cole seconded, all in favour.
24. Review Allotment Terms of Reference – Mrs Peckham proposed terms remain the same, Mr Cock seconded, 8 in favour, Mr Cole abstained.
25. Review Financial Regulations – Mrs Peckham felt the monetary amounts stated within the Contracts Clause (11 i) needed reviewing (*where the value of work is below £1000 but above £200, the Clerk shall strive to obtain three estimates*). She said in today's climate, it is very difficult to obtain three quotes for low cost work and therefore this needed to be reworded or the amounts increased so that if three quotes could not be obtained then the council was adhering to the regulations. To be discussed next meeting.

CORRESPONDENCE

26. BCKLWN – Email – Weekly Covid-19 Update from Cllr Stuart Dark; Bexwell to Bury St Edmunds Pipeline Scheme
27. NCC – Email – Carriageway resurfacing works on B1112 Feltwell to Hockwold Road commencing 07/06/21 for 2 weeks; Various News Releases

CORRESPONDENCE (CONT)

- 28. RAF Lakenheath – Notification of emergency explosive operations 25/2/21 (7 detonations) and explosive training 26/2/21 (8 detonations)
- 29. TWR Accountants – Email – Latest Budget
- 30. Norfolk & Waveney CCG – Email - Translation and Easy Read Pages - NWCCG Website
- 31. Anglian Water – Email – Virtual Engagement Event 22/2/2021 re new pipeline scheme
- 32. CPRE - Email - CPRE Norfolk Awards 2021
- 33. Office for National Statistics - Census 2021 – Email - Questions members of the public may ask
- 34. Brochures - Parish Magazine

35. **CHEQUES** –Mr Lambert proposed approving the payments list, Mr Studd seconded, all in favour. Cheques to be signed for the following – J Martin £50.51, S Sargent £58.83, T George £80.00, Viridor £147.05, URM £32.40, A Stannard £189.00, SP Trees & Landscapes £270.00, BCKLWN £848.02, Cash £50.00, E.ON £333.59, BT £54.36, K&M Lighting £252.00, K&M Lighting £103.27. Standing order to J Martin £846.47.

36. PLANNING

- **Mr S Watson: Retrospective construction of garden building at 26 Oak Street** – Clerk had circulated details of this application prior to the meeting so that any questions could be answered and considered before the deadline of 9th March. Clerk was asked to contact both the Planning Officer, Lucy Smith, and Borough Councillor Adrian Lawrence, to ask (1) why the applicant was continuously allowed to submit retrospective planning applications each time the construction breached planning regulations (2) why concerns regarding parking on the initial application appeared to have either been completely ignored or disregarded by Highways and (3) why the planning notice was not situated nearer to the property. Cllr Lawrence was also asked to call the application in for consideration by the Planning Committee. Cllr Lawrence replied after consulting planning officers and said that it was only the impact of the design that was being considered within this application and parking concerns had already been addressed and agreed in the previous application. He said he would call the application in if still required but that the Chairman or representative would need to speak at the Planning Committee meeting. He attached the Planning Officer's response which had also been sent to the Parish Council with the statement that the notice was displayed near to the property although the Chair said this wasn't the case. Councillors felt the main concern was parking and the effect it was having on traffic flow. If the development was to be inhabited then Oak Street was in danger of being completely snarled up. It was agreed to contact Highways directly in the hope they could advise measures to ease traffic congestion along this road. It was also queried whether planning permission had been obtained to erect the fence at the front of the property as this was beyond the 1m height limit permitted for a fence neighbouring a highway however Mr Storey believed the limit was 1.8m. Clerk to enquire what correct limit is before planning permission is required. Mr Storey said he would be prepared to comment on this application if it were brought before the Planning Committee. Mr Cole proposed REFUSING this application for the following reasons and clauses added as below, Mrs McGeeney seconded, 8 in favour, Mr Storey abstained.

1. The applicant has twice breached planning regulations
2. The parking situation along Oak Street already presents safety hazards due to the owners and visitors to the property choosing to park on the road rather than on their driveway where there is ample room. Safety will be further compromised if the residents of the garden building also choose to park on the road
3. A clause must be added stipulating the building will be for garden use only and not residential
4. Rotating the building 90 degrees without permission has reduced the car parking spaces available should the building become inhabited
5. A condition must be added strictly prohibiting drivers from parking in an area which prevents residents opposite from accessing their driveway.

PLANNING (CONT)

Mr Storey emphasised that the Parish Council could always request a planning application go before the Planning Committee via himself or Cllr Lawrence but Mrs Peckham reminded him that when Cllr Lawrence was recently asked to call in an application, he said there was no need as it would happen automatically if the Parish Council's decision differed to that of the Borough Council. Mr Storey said he had made enquiries as to why this did not happen but unfortunately did not have the information to hand. Mr Rayner said on several recent occasions when the Parish Council's decision differed to that of Borough, the application had gone no further than the Sifting Panel. Mr Lambert felt the Sifting Panel was an unfair, undemocratic process and that members do not care about the impact permitted applications have on village life if it is not in their neighbourhood. Mr Cock said he felt let down by Cllr Lawrence as he was not supporting the Parish Council in this or other applications. Mr Storey said if the Parish Council felt it was not being represented properly then he could call the application in himself.

- Mr I Hamilton: Replacement conservatory to front of property at Chantek, 4 Leonards Lane – Mrs Arnold proposed this application be APPROVED, Mr Cock seconded, 8 in favour, Mr Storey abstained.

- Hemingford Construction Ltd: Reserved Matters – Residential development of 19 dwellings at Long Lane Farm, 30 Long Lane – The Clerk had received a response from the Planning Officer as well as an invitation from the developer to attend a meeting if required. Although the deadline had passed for comment, Mr Storey said if this application were to go before the Planning Committee, a Parish Council representative could attend this meeting to voice concerns. Mr Cock felt the Parish Council needed to work with the developers on this occasion to achieve the best possible outcome for the village. Mr Lambert agreed and said it was not necessary to object but to push forward certain issues such as flooding, pathways, street lighting and parking for customers to Feltwell Chinese. He therefore proposed writing a detailed letter to the Planning Officer to address these concerns and to request the following conditions are added, and if the council was not satisfied with the response then the invitation to meet with the developer should be accepted, Mr Cole seconded, 8 in favour, Mr Storey abstained.

1. Flooding - The developers must install a drainage system to cope with the influx of the extra water from this development somewhere off site other than the village dykes which will just cause serious problems elsewhere in the village and on surrounding farmland
2. A clause must be added to ensure the entire site area is maintained by the developers for the lifetime of the development as stated in their email
3. A clause must be added stating to ensure the chalk barn is made safe and maintained as per the architect's email
4. Street lighting - A condition for street lights to be provided if possible must be added
5. Parking could be provided for customers of the Chinese Takeaway to prevent congestion and safety risks caused by parking on verges within the development and by the access on Long Lane

- Mr D Bayley: Replacing boundary hedge with 6'6" fence at 2 Oak Street – Clerk to obtain update.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

37. Allotments – Mr Cole said there were some deep potholes along the allotment track. Mr Lambert asked whether trees were going to be planted in the allotment hedges as had been discussed previously. Date of next Allotment Meeting to be arranged with the Chairman, Mr Storey but Clerk will add both items to the agenda. Mrs Peckham said there were some holes in the playing field car park and asked if they could be filled at the same time as the track.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS (CONT)

38. Funfair – Clerk said she had been asked by Robert Summers if he could still bring his fair to the village for a week in June or alternatively September. It was felt June was too soon but September could be considered nearer the time.

39. Fete & Carnival – Mrs Wilson said the Feltwell Community Fund had decided to cancel the fete again this year due to Covid-19 restrictions.

40. Resignation – The Chair announced the resignation of Mr Studd who is moving to North Wales in due course and thanked him for his services to the Parish Council.

Next Parish Council meeting to be held virtually on Monday 12th April 2021 at 7.00 pm via the Zoom platform. Meeting declared closed 8.56 pm.

- Hemingford Construction Ltd: Reserved Matters – Residential development of 19 dwellings at Long Lane Farm, 30 Long Lane (AMENDED) – Clerk to request meeting with Hemingford Construction and Flagship Housing.

Messrs Barwell and Geoffrey Field - 6 new replacement dwellings at 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 Oulsham Drive, Southery - APPROVED